

MOTION PICTURES AND THE  
SOCIAL ATTITUDES OF CHILDREN

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ATLANTA UNIVERSITY  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

BY

RUBY DALE HILL

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

AUGUST, 1952

R = 1V    T = 48

365

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Problem.....	1
Methodology.....	4
Related Studies.....	6
II. MOTION PICTURES AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN.....	9
III. MOTION PICTURES AND HIGH SCHOOL CHILDREN.....	25
IV. SUMMARY.....	41
APPENDIX.....	45
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	47

# LIST OF TABLES

iii

Table	Page
1. Distribution of Responses of Elementary Subjects By Pre-test, By Re-test, By End-test, By Number and By Percent .....	10
2. Responses of Thirty Elementary Subjects of the Lemon Street Elementary School to Selected Questions Regarding Honesty Before Viewing a Motion Picture "How Honest Are You" By Number and Percent .....	12
3. Distribution of Favorable Responses of Thirty Elementary Subjects of the Lemon Street Elementary School to Selected Questions Regarding Honesty Before Viewing a Motion Picture "How Honest Are You" By Sex, By Number, and By Percent .....	16
4. Responses of Thirty Elementary Subjects of the Lemon Street Elementary School to Selected Questions Regarding Honesty After Viewing a Motion Picture "How Honest Are You" By Pre-test Scores, Re-test Scores and Difference By Number and Percent .....	18
5. Distribution of Favorable and Unfavorable Responses of Elementary and High School Subjects .....	20
6. Responses of Thirty Elementary Subjects of the Lemon Street Elementary School to Selected Questions Regarding Honesty One Week After Viewing a Motion Picture "How Honest Are You" By Pre-test Scores, End-test Scores and Difference By Number and Percent .....	22
7. Distribution of Responses of Thirty High School Subjects By Pre-test, By Re-test, By End-test, By Sex, By Number and By Percent .....	26
8. Responses of Thirty High School Subjects of the Lemon Street High School to Selected Questions Regarding Honesty Before Viewing a Motion Picture "How Honest Are You" By Number and Percent .....	28
9. Favorable Responses of Thirty High School Subjects of the Lemon Street High School to Selected Questions Regarding Honesty Before Viewing a Motion Picture "How Honest Are You" By Sex, By Number and Percent .....	30
10. Responses of Thirty High School Subjects of the Lemon Street High School to Selected Questions Regarding Honesty After Viewing a Motion Picture "How Honest Are You" By Pre-test Scores, Re-test Scores and Difference By Number and Percent...	32

## Table

## Page

11. Favorable Responses of Thirty High School Subjects of the Lemon Street School to Selected Questions Regarding Honesty One Week After Viewing a Motion Picture "How Honest Are You" By Pre-test Scores, End-test Scores and Difference By Number and Percent ..... 34
12. Responses of Thirty Elementary Subjects of the Lemon Street Elementary School and Thirty High School Subjects of the Lemon Street High School to Selected Questions Regarding Honesty Before and After Viewing a Motion Picture "How Honest Are You" By Pre-test Scores, By Re-test Scores, By End-test Scores and Difference By Number ..... 36
13. Distribution of Favorable Responses of Elementary and High School Subjects By Pre-test, By Re-test, By End-test, By Sex ..... 39

## INTRODUCTION

### The Problem

The problem of effecting social change has long perplexed educators and others desirous of reframing and reshaping the social order. Basically or fundamentally, there are only two avenues through which human behavior may be controlled: First, one may operate on the situations within which people must act or upon their perceptions of the situation, without attempting directly to alter their attitudes, sentiments or values. Second, control may be gained through direct appeal to the values of attitudes of individuals, without necessarily changing the actual or potential situation of action in other respects. To put the matter simply, it becomes a question of either changing the situation or changing the individual.<sup>1</sup>

The present project is an attempt to inquire into the merits and mechanisms of the second approach---changing the attitudes of the individual by application of one type of stimuli, the motion picture. The crucial question to be raised here is, what is the effect of this communication medium on human thinking? Since this of necessity leads into a consideration of attitudes, and since the elusive nature of the concept of attitude defies universal agreement, it is well to acquaint ourselves with the term as it is used in contemporary social science.

W. I. Thomas was one of the first social psychologists to define attitudes and subject them to scientific research. To Thomas "an attitude is the individual counterpart of a social value. Activity in whatever form is the bond between them."<sup>2</sup> To him an attitude cannot occur alone but as a

---

<sup>1</sup> Robin M. Williams, The Reduction of Intergroup Tensions, (New York, 1947), P. 17.

<sup>2</sup> W. I. Thomas and F. Znaniecki, The Polish Peasant in Europe and America (New York, 1927), P. 22.

combination of an attitude and a value. Attitudes which occur are the result of social objects which have influenced the individual or group.

L. L. Thurstone has defined attitudes as "the sum total of man's inclination and feelings, prejudices or biases, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats and convictions about any specific topic".<sup>1</sup> To him a person's attitude about an issue is how he feels about that issue.

E. T. Kruger and W. C. Reckless state "an attitude comes into existence as the result of experience, and it expresses itself in overt activity toward objects in further experience. Subjectively, it is an inner tendency to act in some characteristic way toward meaningful objects; objectively, it is manifested in activity as a mode or way of response".<sup>2</sup> To him there has to be a past experience to set any future activity into action.

E. S. Bogardus defines attitude as "a tendency to act toward or against something in the environment which becomes thereby a positive or negative value".<sup>3</sup> To Bogardus attitudes have meaning only when they are related to a value. They may be as numerous as the objects to which a person responds. Therefore, any individual may be the possessor of innumerable attitudes. The distinguishing evidence of an attitude is behavior, with no behavior evident, no attitude can be claimed.

Floyd Allport and Daniel Katz have defined attitudes as "sets for certain kinds of verbal responses which express objects, or as the set

---

<sup>1</sup>L. L. Thurstone, "Attitudes Can be Measured". The American Journal of Sociology, XXXIII (January, 1928), P. 52.

<sup>2</sup>E. T. Kruger and W. C. Reckless, Social Psychology, (New York, 1933), P. 238.

<sup>3</sup>E. S. Bogardus, Fundamentals of Social Psychology, (New York, 1931, P. 52.

responds in a particular type of situation. This set may or may not be well integrated with the remainder of the individual's personality".<sup>1</sup>

Likewise, Kimball Young supports the point of view that "an attitude is essentially a form of anticipatory response, a beginning of action which is not necessarily completed".<sup>2</sup> To Young an attitude is more dynamic and predictive of behavior trends than a mere opinion or idea, and an attitude must be linked with three important features, namely, "attitudes are usually associated with images, ideas, or external objects of attention. Second, attitudes express direction. Third, attitudes, at least the significant ones, are linked to feelings and emotions".<sup>3</sup>

In view of the definitions stated above, the term attitude as employed in this investigation denotes the mental emotional determinants of behavior or thought responses which represent persistent general orientations of the individual toward his environment. So conceived, an attitude is a state of readiness which is discoverable in the overt behavior of the group.

This study will be guided by the following hypothesis, namely, that motion pictures shift the attitudes of the individual in the direction of the theme of the picture; and further, that this shift will vary in the orientation of the individual in accordance with his age, his sex, and his educational level. To test this hypothesis, we need to know the answers to a number of questions. Among which are the following: (1) Is sex a factor in the formation of attitudes? (2) Is there a difference in the nature and degree of influence of the motion picture on attitudes in terms of age and

---

<sup>1</sup> Floyd Allport and Daniel Katz, Student Attitudes, (New York, 1931), P. 354.

<sup>2</sup> Kimball Young, Social Psychology, (New York, 1946), P. 121.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., P. 122.

in terms of education? (3) Are the effects of the motion picture on attitudes durable? If not are the effects completely neutralized or eliminated by time? (4) Does the exposure to a motion picture with a positive theme tend to produce stronger positive attitudes toward the issue?

### Methodology

In approaching the problem, one matter of immediate concern was the selection of a motion picture that met certain conditions: (1) The picture must definitely pertain to a particular issue; (2) it must be free of objectionable material; and, (3) the motion picture must be one that had not been previously seen by the groups. Five films were reviewed, and from them the one used in the study was chosen. The title of the film is "How Honest Are You". The theme "honesty" was chosen for the issue because that value is one which is greatly emphasized in our society and familiar to all groups.

The film showed two instances where "honesty" was involved. The first was a classroom scene where students were being given an examination. One student observed two others communicating and, assuming that this was evidence of cheating, informed the teacher. Later the teacher's investigation revealed that the girls were not cheating and the informer had been motivated by envy to try and discredit her schoolmates.

The other instance revolved around a girl reporting to the school's coach that a certain boy had been seen taking money from the locker of another boy. Investigation proved that the accused was getting a whistle which had previously been borrowed from him and that the girl's action was due to the fact that discrediting of this boy would make a place on the team for a friend of hers. Secondly, an attitude scale was constructed to fit the content of the chosen motion picture. The scale was composed of sixteen questions arranged with alternative answers, one supposed to be



favorable to "honesty" and the other unfavorable to "honesty". The scale value was sixteen (16) which gives each "yes" answer to the favorable item a value of one (1).

Thirdly, the attitude scale was administered to two groups of volunteer subjects. One group was the sixth grade of the Lemon Street Elementary School of Marietta, Georgia and the other group was the eleventh grade of the Lemon Street High School of the same city. Each group was pre-tested one week before the showing of the film, re-tested the day after the showing of the film and end-tested one week later. Each group was composed of thirty (30) students, equated as to sex. The scales were administered to the subjects without any explanation and no communication was allowed during the experiments. This was done to prevent the possibility of sharing of ideas on the part of the respondents. A response of "yes" or "no" was asked for each choice and the group who responds "yes" to the largest number of favorable items on the scales will be considered more favorable toward "honesty". A total group score is the mean score value of all "yes" responses to the favorable items. The same scores computed for the first experiment are used as controls to measure the shifts of the later experiments. The chi square test will be applied to test any significant change in the group experiments or between the groups. The chi square test is widely used in testing for goodness of fit and in testing the validity of hypotheses.<sup>1</sup> The critical ratio will be computed to indicate any significant difference between the sexes. The critical ratio is the ratio of a difference to its standard error and is especially appropriate for testing the statistical significant of difference between

---

<sup>1</sup> Thomas A. McCormick, Elementary Statistics, (New York, 1941), P. 304.

two percentages.<sup>1</sup> This method is similar to the one Bogardus used in his study, "Measuring Changes in Ethnic Reactions", of two groups of subjects.<sup>2</sup>

#### Related Studies

Numerous students have interested themselves in one or another aspect of this general problem. The most thorough studies of short term effects were made in the early 1930's through the subvention of the Payne Fund, which made it possible for some of the leading psychologists and sociologists to investigate the effects of motion pictures on attitudes and other related studies. Three sets of facts stand out: (1) every study, showed striking individual differences in the response to motion pictures; (2) there were clear differences in reaction in terms of age; (3) the effects remained for some time.

R. C. Peterson and L. L. Thurstone to examine attitudes toward crime, war, race and other problems, gave attitudes tests to students of two high schools in Illinois before and after they had seen certain motion pictures, to find what effect these pictures would have on the students' scores on the tests. The same tests were given two and one-half (2½) months later to see if there had been any shifts during that time interval. Results showed that the attitudes of children toward a social value can be measurably changed by one exposure to a picture and the shifts created by exposure have substantial permanence.<sup>3</sup>

M. A. May and F. K. Shuttleworth conducted a study on the relations of movie attendance to attitudes toward objects of social interest, like people of other lands, prohibition, crime, et cetera. They studied 416 movie cases and 443 non-movie cases. Each group, equated as to age and school grade was

---

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., P. 258.

<sup>2</sup>E. S. Bogardus, "Measuring Changes in Ethnic Reactions", American Sociological Review, XVI. (February, 1951), Pp. 48-51.

<sup>3</sup>Ruth C. Peterson and L. L. Thurston, Motion Pictures and the Social Attitudes of Children, (New York, 1933).

given a series of statements which might possibly be attributed to movie attendance. They say in conclusion, that "The movies exert an influence there can be no doubt and the influence varied with age and school grade."<sup>1</sup>

The next extensive survey of motion pictures and their effects were those conducted during World War II, by the Experiment Section of the Research Branch in the War Departments Information and Education Division in their "Why We Fight" series, developed for the indoctrination of members into armed forces. This series was not strictly training films, but was aimed to get across particular interpretations of facts, to overcome prejudices, arouse motivations and in general, to modify attitudes. In testing films, tentative fact and opinion quizzes were developed and presented in intensive interviews with typical soldiers. After revisions on the basis of tryouts questionnaires were administered before and after showing the films to two comparable groups. The same questionnaires were administered one week later. Results were: (1) the films had marked effects on the men's knowledge of factual material concerning the events leading up to war; (2) the films had some marked effects on opinions where they specifically covered the factors involved in a particular interpretation; (3) the film had only a very few effects on opinion items of a more general nature that had been prepared independently of film contents, but which were considered the criteria for determining the effectiveness of the films in their orientation objectives.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the Payne Fund and Army Experimental Studies, Mildred J. Wiese and Stuart G. Cole made an isolated analysis of the effect that the motion picture "Tomorrow the World" would have on attitudes with reference to topics such as, place of women and girls in the family and nation, treatment

---

<sup>1</sup>See W. W. Charters, Motion Pictures and Youth, (New York, 1933), Pp. 16-17.

<sup>2</sup>See Norman J. Powell, Anatomy of Public Opinion, 1951. Pp. 334-337.

of Jews, et cetera. Three thousand (3000) high school students, who had grown up in the Nazi World, with varied backgrounds and in different communities, were given free response attitude tests before and after seeing the film. The film had a measurable effect on the children, although, its magnitude varied with the child. Of special interest was the finding that what children saw in the film tended to be a reflection of their own background.<sup>1</sup>

The present study is organized in the following manner: Chapter II gives a full report of the effects of the chosen motion picture: "How Honest Are You" on the attitudes of elementary children. Chapter III takes under consideration the effects the same motion picture will have on the attitudes of the high school group. The same steps will be taken to make both chapters explicit and the results will be tabulated and presented in tables. The summary will present the findings derived from the experimental processes.

---

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., Pp. 338-339.

## CHAPTER II

### MOTION PICTURES AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

"Honesty is the best policy" is a rule which is drilled into the thinking of children who grow up in our society.<sup>1</sup> On every hand one meets it, at home, in school, at church and elsewhere. It is a cardinal principle by which, we assume, the lives of all are ordered. At the same time there is considerable evidence that there may be, not only, differences in the way people react to this preachment, but also, differences in their understanding of what it means and how and when the rule is to be applied.<sup>2</sup> It comes to be a matter almost of individual interpretation and a consequent rephrasing of the statement to read "honesty is the best policy when it is expedient to be honest". It might be well to search some of the motivations for these individual differences and understandings before even suggesting that the potency of a motion picture is such as can sway the attitudes of children toward a given theme. To point out a few regarding children, one may question their limited experiences, their vagueness of terms, their urges for fantasy worlds, their eagerness to please elders and innumerable others. Nevertheless, parallel to these is the fact that children are continually trying to visualize themselves in this world of which they are a part. Motion pictures are believed to help them attain this goal.

This chapter treats the reactions of thirty elementary children to "honesty" as a value. Being sixth grade pupils, eleven and twelve years in age, one would expect that there might exist some lack of firmness in their attitudes.

---

<sup>1</sup>A. R. Lindesmith and A. L. Strauss, Social Psychology, (New York, 1949), Pp. 180-182.

<sup>2</sup>See Jean Piaget "The Rules of the Game" in L. Wilson and W. L. Kolb. Sociological Analysis, (New York, 1949), Pp. 195-207.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES OF ELEMENTARY SUBJECTS BY PRE-TEST, BY RE-TEST BY  
END-TEST, BY SEX, BY NUMBER AND BY PERCENT

Responses	Pre-Test						Re-Test						End- Test					
	Total		Boys		Girls		Total		Boys		Girls		Total		Boys		Girls	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Favorable	229	47.7	126	26.3	103	21.4	327	68.1	165	34.4	162	33.7	279	58.1	143	29.8	136	28.3
Unfavorable	251	52.3	114	23.7	137	28.6	153	31.9	75	15.6	78	16.3	201	41.9	97	20.2	104	21.7
Total	480	100.	240	50.0	240	50.0	480	100.	240	50.	240	50.	480	100.	240	50.	240	50.

\*Pre-test Mean Score 7.63

\*Re-test Mean Score 10.9

\*End-test Mean Score 9.3

\* The mean score value is the average number of responses checked by the group.

Before going into the details of the experiments it might be advantageous for us to acquaint ourselves with the responses checked by the individuals. Table I presents the distribution of responses of the elementary subjects by pre-test, by re-test, by end-test, by sex, by number and by percent. The table reveals the percentages and the mean score value which are used to measure the degree of shifts.

Table II presents the responses of the thirty elementary subjects of the Lemon Street Elementary School to selected questions regarding "honesty" before viewing the motion picture "How Honest Are You", by number and percent. Here we have the attitudes for and against "honesty" as they were checked on the attitude scale. It was expected that the majority of the subjects would have evidenced more "yes" responses acceptable to this value, but tabulations reveal a mean group score of 7.63 which represents only 47.7 percent of the group. This suggests that the distinction between the attitudes children possess regarding a particular issue and the actual expression of behavior differ immensely. It may suggest further that no group will possess more "honesty" than it is willing to tolerate. If acting different from the norm has become a practice, no one can be expected to refrain from it unless the basic associations are removed.<sup>1</sup>

It is not intentional to say here that the subjects who gave "unfavorable" responses are more morally unappreciative. There is no way of knowing who gives the honest responses. The negative replies may simply reflect the general attitudes of "success at any price" so apparent in our contemporary society.

It may be pointed out, however, that various questions did receive a large number of responses from the group for "honesty". For instance, question

---

<sup>1</sup> Lindesmith and Strauss, Op. Cit., P. 197.

TABLE 2

RESPONSES OF THIRTY ELEMENTARY SUBJECTS OF THE LEMON STREET  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO SELECTED QUESTIONS REGARDING HONESTY  
BEFORE VIEWING A MOTION PICTURE "HOW HONEST ARE YOU"  
BY NUMBER AND PERCENT

Questions	Favorable		Unfavorable	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1. Would an honest boy or girl keep something he finds?	28	93.3	2	6.7
2. Would an honest boy or girl let another be blamed for something he did?	12	40.	18	60.
3. Would an honest boy or girl accept honors for something which rightfully belonged to another?	10	33.3	20	66.7
4. Would an honest boy or girl take more than his share of anything?	20	66.7	10	33.3
5. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth?	13	43.3	17	56.7
6. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a friend?	8	26.7	22	73.3
7. Would an honest boy or girl tell the coach of a team that a player was dishonest?	9	30.	21	70.
8. Would an honest boy or girl tell his friend something about the dishonesty of another?	12	40.	18	60.
9. Would an honest boy or girl steal something from a friend?	15	50.	15	50.
10. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth to friends?	13	43.3	17	56.7
11. Would an honest boy or girl steal something at school?	12	40.	18	60.
12. Would an honest boy or girl steal his friend's belongings?	22	73.3	8	26.7
13. Would an honest boy or girl cheat on an examination?	11	36.7	19	63.3
14. Would an honest boy or girl let another person copy from his paper at school?	14	46.7	16	53.3
15. Would an honest boy or girl listen to gossip about a friend?	20	66.7	10	33.3
16. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a player in the game?	10	33.3	20	66.7
Total	229	47.7	251	52.2



one, "Would an honest boy or girl keep something he finds if the owner cannot be located?", received twenty-eight "yes" responses. The alternative answer was that the finder would keep possession if no one saw him find the object. The twenty-eight favorable responses as over against the two alternative or unfavorable responses suggest that these pupils had reached some decision with respect to proper social behavior, and that they recognize that others also possess rights even though there may be no one present to speak for those rights. It further suggests that the process of inculcation and internalization of values had met with some success among the pupils as a group in this case.

It may be noted also that reactions are high in reliable responses where friendship is involved. Question twelve, "Would an honest boy or girl steal his friend's belongings if it meant keeping him out of trouble?" received twenty-two "favorable" responses. This may indicate that friendship is very influential in motivating attitudinal behavior with the majority of the group. It seems to indicate some evidence of protectiveness which appears to be characteristic of group living.

The same behavior is repeated in question fifteen where twenty of the subjects agreed that an honest boy or girl would listen to gossip about a friend only if it meant he could help his friend by acquiring this knowledge. It seems to accentuate the fact that loyalty to a friend goes a long way in contributing to the attitudinal behavior of these individuals.

Question six, "Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a friend if that friend had hurt him once?" received twenty-one "favorable" responses while only eight said that they would tell an untruth only if they did not know what they were doing. The consensus of the group seems to follow the old adage "a hurt dog will strike back". It may be that the majority of the group feel that there is little question of "honesty" where personal pain or

discomfort is involved. It, further, suggests that intense emotional excitement may produce disorganization of an individual's habits and the "little white lie" thereby becomes an accepted device in the process of reestablishing equilibrium.

Question three, "Would an honest boy or girl accept honors for something which rightfully belonged to another if he were not aware of it?" received ten assenting replies while the alternative "if it meant extra money for himself" received twenty responses. This seems to point out that "honesty" can hardly be called a general trait. An individual who is honest in one situation is often dishonest in another. Basic to this conduct is the way in which he defines the situation. Therefore, one cannot predict the attitudinal behavior of individuals without knowing the dominant factors involved in their ways of life. Even then that highly variable segment of the self which Mead<sup>1</sup> calls the "I" defies prediction and can be observed only in retrospect.

The friendship factor seems to be as prevalent for "dishonesty" as it is for "honesty". Question sixteen, "Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a player if it meant giving his favorite player a chance to play?" received twenty "favorable" responses. Here friendship seems to be a "touchy" subject over ruling all sense of conventional honor. The subjects seem to say "for friendship I'll do anything". The factor of friendship is not as apparent in question seven, where twenty-one persons said that an honest boy or girl would tell the coach of a team that a player was dishonest if it meant getting even with the player. Here it seems as if it is all right to "stand by" associates who have never hurt you, but if they have inflicted injury then it becomes incumbent upon the victim to "get even".

---

<sup>1</sup>G. H. Mead, Mind Self and Society, (Chicago, 1934), P. 177.

Hartshone and May<sup>1</sup> in their study on "honesty" concluded that, where active "dishonesty" occurs it is likely to be for one of four reasons:

(1) What the individual wants is disapproved and so he tries to get it in a surreptitious manner. (2) What he wants is too hard to get by fair means or he does not know how thus to get it. (3) What he does is approved by some special group, a gang, a class, a club, though not by society. (4) The individual is mentally deficient, although sometimes this is less a reason than an excuse which the individual has learned to exploit.

There are any number of assumptions that might be presented in attempting to determine why individuals respond in a situation in a given way, but no conclusions can be reached as to what motives are behind the formation of attitudes or to whom the individual is responding. Even if the individual is interviewed, he could hardly be expected to give more plausible answers for his attitudinal behavior; he can point to no particular thing. A multiplicity of motives are organized around any object and there is no doubt that they have a share in formulating attitudes.

The foregoing discussion described the pattern of responses when the group was considered without regard to the sex factor. The question which now presents itself is whether or not the sex of the subjects makes a difference in their reactions.

Table III represents the distribution of favorable responses of the thirty elementary subjects to the Lemon Street Elementary School to selected questions regarding honesty before viewing the motion picture "How Honest Are You" by sex, by number, and by percent. There appeared to be little difference between the reactions of the boys and the girls to this value.

---

<sup>1</sup>C. Hartshone and M. A. May, Studies in Deceit and Character, (New York, 1928), P. 28.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF FAVORABLE RESPONSES OF THIRTY ELEMENTARY  
SUBJECTS OF THE LEMON STREET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO SELECTED  
QUESTIONS REGARDING HONESTY BEFORE VIEWING A MOTION PICTURE  
"HOW HONEST ARE YOU" BY SEX, BY NUMBER, AND BY PERCENT

Questions	Total	Boys		Girls	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1. Would an honest boy or girl keep something he finds?	28	14	46.7	14	46.7
2. Would an honest boy or girl let another be blamed for something he did?	12	5	16.7	7	23.3
3. Would an honest boy or girl accept honors for something which rightfully belonged to another?	10	6	20.	4	13.3
4. Would an honest boy or girl take more than his share of anything?	20	10	33.3	10	33.3
5. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth?	13	8	26.7	5	16.7
6. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a friend?	8	8	26.7	5	16.7
7. Would an honest boy or girl tell the coach of a team that a player was dishonest?	9	4	13.3	5	16.7
8. Would an honest boy or girl tell his friend something about the dishonesty of another?	12	9	30.	3	10.
9. Would an honest boy or girl steal something from a friend?	15	8	26.7	7	23.3
10. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth to friends?	13	9	30.	4	13.3
11. Would an honest boy or girl steal something at school?	12	6	20.	6	20.
12. Would an honest boy or girl steal his friend's belongings?	22	11	36.7	11	36.7
13. Would an honest boy or girl cheat on an examination?	11	7	23.3	4	13.3
14. Would an honest boy or girl let another person copy from his paper at school?	14	4	13.3	10	33.3
15. Would an honest boy or girl listen to gossip about a friend?	20	11	36.7	9	30.
16. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a player in the game?	10	6	20.	4	13.3
Total	229	126	26.3	103	21.4

Tabulations show that 26.3 percent of the boys' responses and 21.4 percent of the girls' responses were for "honesty" but the computed critical ratio (1.78) indicates that the difference between the percentages of the sexes was of doubtful statistical significance. It is a difference likely to occur more than five times out of one hundred by chance. Therefore, little weight can be attached to the idea that there is a difference in attitudinal behavior toward "honesty" between the sexes of this group. It remains now to see what effect the motion picture will have upon the attitudes of these individuals.

The purpose of the experiment conducted the day after the showing of the film was to see if the attitudes of the subjects had been influenced by the stimulus. It was thought that if the film was effective its influence should be manifested in an increase in the "yes" responses to the questions favorable to "honesty". Table IV presents the responses of the thirty elementary subjects of the Lemon Street Elementary School to selected questions regarding "honesty" after viewing the motion picture "How Honest Are You" by pre-test scores, re-test scores and difference by number and percent. The table reveals that the mean score of these thirty elementary subjects shifted from 7.63 to 10.90 favorable to "honesty". The number of favorable responses shifted from 229 in the pre-test to 327 in the re-test which means that 68.1 percent of the group's responses are favorable to "honesty" after the experiment. Statistically significant differences were revealed by the chi square test between the pre-test and re-test responses to "honesty" in the sample.

The application of the chi square test is to find if the shift of responses between the experiments is statistically significant; and, the test is also used to see if there is a significant difference between the elementary and high school subjects. An illustration of the latter may be

TABLE 4

RESPONSES OF THIRTY ELEMENTARY SUBJECTS OF THE LEMON STREET  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO SELECTED QUESTIONS REGARDING HONESTY  
AFTER VIEWING A MOTION PICTURE "HOW HONEST ARE YOU"  
BY PRE-TEST SCORES, RE-TEST SCORES AND DIFFERENCE BY NUMBERS  
AND PERCENT

Questions	Pre-test	Re-test	Difference	
			No.	Pct.
1. Would an honest boy or girl keep something he finds?	28	27	-1	-3.6
2. Would an honest boy or girl let another be blamed for something he did?	12	20	8	66.1
3. Would an honest boy or girl accept honors for something which rightfully belonged to another?	10	18	8	66.1
4. Would an honest boy or girl take more than his share of anything?	20	22	2	10.
5. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth?	13	14	1	7.7
6. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a friend?	8	15	7	87.5
7. Would an honest boy or girl tell the coach of a team that a player was dishonest?	9	15	6	66.7
8. Would an honest boy or girl tell his friend something about the dishonesty of another?	12	22	10	83.3
9. Would an honest boy or girl steal something from a friend?	15	21	6	40.
10. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth to friends?	13	19	6	46.1
11. Would an honest boy or girl steal something at school?	12	24	12	100.
12. Would an honest boy or girl steal his friend's belongings?	22	19	-3	-13.6
13. Would an honest boy or girl cheat on an examination?	11	22	11	100.
14. Would an honest boy or girl let another person copy from his paper at school?	14	28	14	100.
15. Would an honest boy or girl listen to gossip about a friend?	20	24	4	20.
16. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a player in the game?	10	17	7	70.
Total	229	327	98	43.4

viewed in table V. Here you have the distribution of the responses of the elementary and high school subjects. The value of P indicates the probability due to chance with one degree of freedom.

The computed chi square value, (41.06 P - .001) indicates that the probability of a difference this large occurring when only chance factors are operating is less than one in a thousand. There must then be other factors operating. Since the film is the control factor here, we may assume that the film made the difference.

It is also shown that there was a variation of shifts for each question. For some there was a decrease in responses favorable to "honesty", others remained stable, and still others showed an increase in responses favorable to "honesty". This indicates that the motion picture did have some influence but it also suggests that while such a stimulus might change some attitudes it may, at the same time, leave others unaffected, influencing some individuals while affecting others slightly if at all.

There is no way of knowing what the children saw in the film. That is, if it was a reflection of some past experience. But the fact that a large proportion of the responses of the subjects did shift indicates that generally the influence of the film was felt.

It might be well to examine various questions and note where the more obvious shifts occurred. Question fourteen, "Would an honest boy or girl let another person copy from his paper at school if it meant teaching the other person"? showed an increase of fourteen points favorable to "honesty". This means that 46.7 percent more of the subjects said "yes" in this experiment than in the last. It is believed that this shift was a direct result of the film.

Likewise, there was a shift of twelve points favorable to "honesty" for question eleven, "Would an honest boy or girl cheat on an examination if it

TABLE 5

DISTRIBUTION OF FAVORABLE AND UNFAVORABLE RESPONSES OF ELEMENTARY AND  
HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS

Responses	Pre-Test		Re-Test		End-Test	
	Favorable	Unfavorable	Favorable	Unfavorable	Favorable	Unfavorable
Elementary	229	251	327	153	279	201
High School	258	222	285	195	271	209
	487	473	612	348	550	410
	$*X^2 = 3.50$ $N = 1$ $P = .05$		$*X^2 = 8.$ $N = 1$ $P = .01$		$*X^2 = 28$ $N = 1$ $P = .50$	

\* Chi square was computed from the total number of responses of both groups.



were for fun or a game"? This means that 40. percent more of the subjects said "yes" in this experiment additional to the ones received in the pre-test favorable to "honesty".

There was a shift of ten "yes" responses for "honesty" for question eight, "Would an honest boy or girl tell his friends something about the dishonesty of another if he wanted to cure the person of the act"? That was a shift of 33.3 percent more of the group. The reliability of shifts is considered when the number is too large for just chance. It suggests that factors other than pure chance must be taken into consideration in explaining the difference.

Question one, "Would an honest boy or girl keep something he finds if the owner cannot be located"? is an example of the ineffectiveness of the stimulus. There was a decrease of one point unfavorable to "honesty" constituting 3.3 percent of the group. This decrease might well be due to chance.

Question twelve "Would an honest boy or girl steal his friend's belongings if it meant keeping his friend out of trouble"? received a 10 percent decrease unfavorable to "honesty".

There is no example of a total group remaining stable for any question, but there are instances where the individuals maintained the same attitudes previously directed toward this value. This suggests that either the attitudes were too well grounded to be swayed or the film did not reach their interest. The over all picture signifies that a motion picture is not a fixed pattern of meanings and ideas and that what the individual gets is determined by his needs. He can be either rejective when values are important to him or receptive when they do not matter, a choice to be made by the individual himself.

Just how long film impressions remain with the individual is yet to be discovered. But the experiment performed one week after the showing of this particular film was to test the continuing influence of the film as a

TABLE 6

RESPONSES OF THIRTY ELEMENTARY SUBJECTS OF THE LEMON STREET  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO SELECTED QUESTIONS REGARDING HONESTY  
ONE WEEK AFTER VIEWING A MOTION PICTURE "HOW HONEST ARE YOU"  
BY PRE-TEST SCORES, END-TEST SCORES AND DIFFERENCE BY NUMBER  
AND PERCENT

Questions	Pre-test	End-test	Difference	
			No.	Pct.
1. Would an honest boy or girl keep something he finds?	28	25	-3	-10.7
2. Would an honest boy or girl let another be blamed for something he did?	12	19	7	58.3
3. Would an honest boy or girl accept honors for something which rightfully belonged to another?	10	11	1	10.
4. Would an honest boy or girl take more than his share of anything?	20	21	1	5.
5. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth?	13	13	0	0
6. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a friend?	8	14	6	75.
7. Would an honest boy or girl tell the coach of a team that a player was dishonest?	9	12	3	33.3
8. Would an honest boy or girl tell his friend something about the dishonesty of another?	12	19	7	58.3
9. Would an honest boy or girl steal something from a friend?	15	17	2	13.3
10. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth to friends?	13	19	6	46.1
11. Would an honest boy or girl steal something at school	12	21	9	75.
12. Would an honest boy or girl steal his friend's belongings?	22	17	-5	-22.7
13. Would an honest boy or girl cheat on an examination?	11	16	5	45.5
14. Would an honest boy or girl let another person copy from his paper at school?	14	18	4	28.6
15. Would an honest boy or girl listen to gossip about a friend?	20	22	2	10.
16. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a player in the game?	10	15	5	50
Total	229	279	50	21.9

stimulus. Tabulations from this experiment reveal that there was a shift of the mean score from 10.90 in the re-test to 9.03 in the end-test. This shift was unfavorable to "honesty". The figure 9.03, however, is still larger than the pre-test score of 7.63. This shows that the effects of the film still appear to persist for this time interval but there is a general tendency of the effects to become partially neutralized.

Table VI presents the responses of the thirty elementary subjects of the Lemon Street Elementary School to selected questions regarding "honesty" one week after viewing the motion picture "How Honest Are You" by pre-test scores, end-test scores and differences by number and percent. It can be seen that there was a decrease in favorable responses for most of the questions for the time interval between the re-test and end-test. This seems to be an indication that the effects were relatively temporary for the majority of the group. The chi square, (10.48 P - .01) indicates that the difference between the responses to "honesty" as between the pre-test and the end-test was statistically significant and that such a change, as is noted, could not be due to chance factors alone.

There was only one case showing an increase in responses during the time interval favorable to "honesty". Although the increase was not large enough to suggest a significant difference statistically but it could very well mean that these individuals did not receive the impact of the film until there was a lapse of time. There were cases where the subjects maintained the same attitudes throughout the experiments. How much this could have been due to the effect of the film and how much remembering responses checked in former experiments is a moot question and one that cannot be answered very easily.

In concluding the chapter we note that there is little difference in the attitude of the sexes responding to "honesty"; that the film did effect the

attitudes of the subjects significantly enough statistically to be noted; and, that the influence of the stimulus tends to diminish with time. We turn now to a consideration of the attitudinal behavior of the high school subjects toward "honesty".

### CHAPTER III

#### MOTION PICTURES AND HIGH SCHOOL CHILDREN

Any stabilized social system imposes some scheme of effective control of conduct on individuals whose conformity to it is expected.<sup>1</sup> A logical assumption would be then, that testing the attitudes of children of high school ages through motion pictures would elicit essentially the same responses as those of elementary school children. Nevertheless, the question presents itself: should not children, whose ages are near adulthood, be able to fathom more realistically the meaning of the make believe world produced by the movies? John Cuber, in speaking to this point suggests that even though the observer is fully aware that the segment of life presented to him on the screen is fictional, the vividness with which it is presented creates such an effective illusion of reality that the person often responds as if the persons and situations were real.<sup>2</sup> It is for this type of situation, the investigator is seeking. Whether the stimulus proposed is potent enough, to create the desired situation, can only be recognized through the unraveling of the supposed tangles created by the test experiments.

Of course, individual and group attitudes may differ widely as to just what constitutes morals and what constitutes simply a matter of good taste; for, available in any society are numerous questions about which wide agreement exists and to which the term moral may be applied with little fear of general contradiction. To put the matter simply, what individuals call "honesty" may be what goes on and is accepted in the society. High

---

<sup>1</sup>Herbert Blumer, "Social Attitudes and Non-Symbolic Interaction", Journal of Educational Sociology, IX. (May, 1936).

<sup>2</sup>John F. Cuber, Sociology, (New York, 1951), P. 509.

TABLE 7

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES OF THIRTY HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS BY PRE-TEST, BY RE-TEST,  
BY END-TEST, BY SEX, BY NUMBER AND BY PERCENT

Responses	Pre-Test						Re-Test						End-Test					
	Total		Boys		Girls		Total		Boys		Girls		Total		Boys		Girls	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
Favorable	258	53.8	129	27	129	27	285	59.4	147	30.6	138	28.8	271	56.5	137	28.5	134	27.9
Unfavorable	222	46.2	111	23	111	23	195	40.6	93	19.4	102	21.2	209	43.5	103	21.5	106	22.1
	480	100	240	50	240	50	480	100	240	50.	240	50.	480	100	240	50.	240	50.

\* Pre-test Mean Score 8.6

\* Re-test Mean Score 9.5

\* End-test Mean Score 9.03

\*The mean score value is the average response of the group.

school children may put more emphasis on the conventions i.e., what is proper than on the actual moral rules.

This chapter treats the reactions of thirty high school children to "honesty" as a moral value. Being sixteen and seventeen years in age, these children should be more set in their attitudinal behavior than elementary children. But too many assumptions cannot be made until the test experiments have been presented.

Table VII presents the distribution of responses of the thirty high school subjects by pre-test, by re-test, by end-test, by sex, by number and by percent. This table is to give some insight into the data exposed in this chapter.

Table VIII presents the responses of the thirty high school subjects of the Lemon Street High School to selected questions regarding honesty before viewing the motion picture "How Honest Are You" by number and percent. The attitudes favorable and unfavorable to "honesty" are presented as they were checked on the attitude scales. Tabulations reveal a mean score of 8.6 which means that 53.75 percent of this group have recognized "honesty" as being the proper way for social behavior.

It can be seen from the scores recorded in the table that various questions received a large number of responses for and against "honesty". To note a few: question four, "Would an honest boy or girl take more than his share of anything if it were going to waste"? received twenty-three responses favorable to "honesty". This suggests that these children are well versed with their mannerisms and do not take anything just to show others what good sports they are.

Question one, "Would an honest boy or girl keep something he finds if the owner cannot be located"? received twenty-nine favorable responses for

TABLE 8

RESPONSES OF THIRTY HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS OF THE LEMON STREET HIGH SCHOOL TO SELECTED QUESTIONS REGARDING HONESTY BEFORE VIEWING A MOTION PICTURE "HOW HONEST ARE YOU" BY NUMBER AND PERCENT

Questions	Favorable		Unfavorable	
	No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1. Would an honest boy or girl keep something he finds?	29	96.7	1	3.3
2. Would an honest boy or girl let another be blamed for something he did?	21	70.	9	30.
3. Would an honest boy or girl accept honors for something which rightfully belonged to another?	21	70.	9	30.
4. Would an honest boy or girl take more than his share of anything	23	76.7	7	23.3
5. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth?	16	53.3	14	46.7
6. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a friend?	9	30.	21	70.
7. Would an honest boy or girl tell the coach of a team that a player was dishonest?	15	50.	15	50.
8. Would an honest boy or girl tell his friend something about the dishonesty of another?	15	50.	15	50.
9. Would an honest boy or girl steal something from a friend?	17	56.7	13	43.3
10. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth to friends?	9	30.	21	70.
11. Would an honest boy or girl steal something at school?	8	26.7	22	73.3
12. Would an honest boy or girl steal his friend's belongings?	17	56.7	13	43.3
13. Would an honest boy or girl cheat on an examination?	11	36.7	19	63.3
14. Would an honest boy or girl let another person copy from his paper at school?	16	53.3	14	46.7
15. Would an honest boy or girl listen to gossip about a friend?	21	70.	9	30.
16. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a player in the game?	10	33.3	20	66.7
Total	258	53.75	222	46.25



"honesty". This indicates that this group also realizes the rights of others even when they are not present to speak for those rights, a factor which seems to be very prevalent in the attitudinal behavior of the majority of this group. It is repeated in question two, "Would an honest boy or girl let another be blamed for something he did if he didn't know what he was doing"? Twenty-one of the subjects responded favorably. In question three, it can be seen that twenty-one of the subjects again replied that an honest boy or girl would accept honors which rightfully belonged to others only if he were not aware of it. This seems to accentuate the fact that these children do rightfully think of others in their attitudinal behavior and defend those rights by taking a firm stand.

The friendship factor was prevalent only once for "honesty". That was in reply to question fifteen, "Would an honest boy or girl listen to gossip about a friend if it meant that he could help his friend by knowing"? Twenty-one of the subjects responded "yes", which could mean that the majority of the group would stand up for friends in any situation. But on the surface here this factor is more prevalent for "dishonesty" in a number of cases. Question six, "Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a friend if that friend had hurt him once"? received twenty-one "yes" responses unfavorable to "honesty" which signifies that friendship and hurt are very different in their thinking and hurt is the weighty factor, meaning when hurt is present all thoughts of "honesty" are absent. Again untruths seem to be a controlling factor for question ten, "Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth to friends if it meant gaining their confidence"? Here twenty-one subjects responded unfavorably to "honesty", which seems to comply with the previously mentioned fact that the individual may be honest only when it is expedient. Likewise, the telling of untruths is still prevalent in question sixteen, "Would an honest boy or girl tell an

TABLE 9

FAVORABLE RESPONSES OF THIRTY HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS OF THE  
LEMON STREET HIGH SCHOOL TO SELECTED QUESTIONS REGARDING  
HONESTY BEFORE VIEWING A MOTION PICTURE "HOW HONEST ARE  
YOU" BY SEX, BY NUMBER AND PERCENT

Questions	Both	Boys		Girls	
		No.	Pct.	No.	Pct.
1. Would an honest boy or girl keep something he finds?	29	15	50.	14	46.7
2. Would an honest boy or girl let another be blamed for something he did?	21	13	43.3	8	26.7
3. Would an honest boy or girl accept honors for something which rightfully belonged to another?	21	12	40.	9	30.
4. Would an honest boy or girl take more than his share of anything?	23	12	40.	11	36.7
5. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth?	16	5	53.3	11	36.7
6. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a friend?	9	5	16.7	4	13.3
7. Would an honest boy or girl tell the coach of a team that a player was dishonest?	15	6	20.	9	30.
8. Would an honest boy or girl tell his friend something about the dishonesty of another?	15	8	26.7	7	23.3
9. Would an honest boy or girl steal something from a friend?	17	7	23.3	10	33.3
10. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth to friends?	9	4	13.3	5	16.7
11. Would an honest boy or girl steal something at school?	8	4	13.3	4	13.3
12. Would an honest boy or girl steal his friend's belongings?	17	6	20.	11	36.7
13. Would an honest boy or girl cheat on an examination?	11	6	20.	5	16.7
14. Would an honest boy or girl let another person copy from his paper at school?	16	9	30.	7	23.3
15. Would an honest boy or girl listen to gossip about a friend?	21	9	30.	12	40.
16. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a player in the game?	10	8	26.7	2	6.7
Total	258	129	27.	129	27.

untruth on a player if it meant giving his favorite player a chance to play"? Twenty of the subjects replied "yes" this is the proper thing to do. The majority of the group seems to think it proper to tell an untruth to gain his advantage, regardless of consequence; they seem to think that self satisfaction is the thing.

Question eleven, "Would an honest boy or girl steal something at school if no one was looking" ? received twenty-two "yes" responses unfavorable to "honesty". This might mean that stealing is one of the conventional pranks around school or in the society and is done from force of habit.

Table IX presents the favorable responses of the thirty high school subjects of the Lemon Street High School to selected questions regarding "honesty" before viewing the motion picture "How Honest Are You" by sex, by number and percent. The critical ratio is not needed here to prove that there is a difference in the attitudinal behavior of this group by sex. It can easily be seen that 50 percent of the total responses was contributed by the girls and the remaining 50 percent was contributed by the boys, which means that there can be no possible difference in their reactions toward this value for this experiment. However, there were slight variations on almost every question but tabulations proved that these variations were equally proportioned between the sexes and did not affect the total number of responses. It remains now to be seen what effect the film will have on the attitudinal behavior of this group toward "honesty".

Table X presents the favorable responses of the thirty high school subjects of the Lemon Street High School to selected questions regarding honesty the day after viewing the motion picture "How Honest Are You" by pre-test scores, re-test scores and difference by number and percent. Tabulations revealed that the mean score of these thirty high school

TABLE 10

RESPONSES OF THIRTY HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS OF THE LEMON STREET HIGH SCHOOL TO SELECTED QUESTIONS REGARDING HONESTY AFTER VIEWING A MOTION PICTURE "HOW HONEST ARE YOU" BY PRE-TEST SCORES, RE-TEST SCORES AND DIFFERENCE BY NUMBER AND PERCENT

Questions	Pre-test	Re-test	Difference	
			No.	Pct.
1. Would an honest boy or girl keep something he finds?	29	26	-3	-10.3
2. Would an honest boy or girl let another be blamed for something he did?	21	19	-2	- 9.5
3. Would an honest boy or girl accept honors for something which rightfully belonged to another?	21	21	0	0
4. Would an honest boy or girl take more than his share of anything?	23	24	1	4.4
5. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth?	16	7	-9	-60.
6. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a friend?	9	14	5	55.5
7. Would an honest boy or girl tell the coach of a team that a player was dishonest?	15	14	-1	- 6.6
8. Would an honest boy or girl tell his friend something about the dishonesty of another?	15	21	6	40.
9. Would an honest boy or girl steal something from a friend?	17	20	3	17.6
10. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth to friends?	9	15	6	66.6
11. Would an honest boy or girl steal something at school?	8	12	4	50.
12. Would an honest boy or girl steal his friend's belongings?	17	22	5	29.4
13. Would an honest boy or girl cheat on an examination?	11	12	1	9.1
14. Would an honest boy or girl let another person copy from his paper at school?	16	16	0	0
15. Would an honest boy or girl listen to gossip about a friend?	21	25	4	19.
16. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a player in the game?	10	17	7	70.
Total	258	285	27	10.5

subjects shifted from 8.6 to 9.5 favorable to "honesty". This shift seems to indicate that the film did have some influence but application of the chi square test revealed different results statistically. The chi square, (3.08  $P = .05$ ), indicates that there is no significance. The probability that chance factors are operating more than five times out of one hundred. Only slight variations may be noted in the responses to the questions. Some were favorable, others unfavorable, while still others remained stable but not to any degree of reliability for significance.

The group seems to have been either defensive in the general sense of protecting themselves against any influence of this stimulus or the film was not potent enough to reach the interest of the group. It might not have diverged too far away from the prevailing mores which have become habit by their daily observance of institutional rules. Therefore, they cannot be expected to refrain from them easily if they hold any importance.

Hartshone and May<sup>1</sup> in their study on "honesty" assert that as an individual problem honest behavior is just one aspect of the total character of the child and has no real significance for his moral welfare apart from its relation to his self organization. If he slips easily into good behavior the presumption is that his bad behavior was a fall from grace, a shift from habits of honest response already learned. This suggests the adage that "you cannot teach an old dog new tricks." These high school children do seem to be more set in their attitudinal behavior toward this value. They seem to be more rejective than receptive. It might mean that they have tested the conventional rules and their early experiences now serving as the basis for future experiences have sensitized them to some influence and immunized them to others. It might

---

<sup>1</sup>C. Hartshone and M. A. May, Studies in Deceit and Character, (New York, 1928), P. 152.

TABLE 11

FAVORABLE RESPONSES OF THIRTY HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS OF THE LEMON STREET SCHOOL TO SELECTED QUESTIONS REGARDING HONESTY ONE WEEK AFTER VIEWING A MOTION PICTURE "HOW HONEST ARE YOU" BY PRE-TEST SCORES; END-TEST SCORES AND DIFFERENCE BY NUMBER AND PERCENT.

Questions	Pre-test	End-test	Difference	
			No.	Pct.
1. Would an honest boy or girl keep something he finds?	29	26	-3	-10.3
2. Would an honest boy or girl let another be blamed for something he did?	21	19	-2	- 9.5
3. Would an honest boy or girl accept honors for something which rightfully belonged to another?	21	21	0	0
4. Would an honest boy or girl take more than his share of anything?	23	20	-3	- 8.7
5. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth?	16	7	-9	-56.2
6. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a friend?	9	12	3	33.3
7. Would an honest boy or girl tell the coach of a team that a player was dishonest?	15	14	-1	- 6.7
8. Would an honest boy or girl tell his friend something about the dishonesty of another?	15	19	4	26.6
9. Would an honest boy or girl steal something from a friend?	17	18	1	5.9
10. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth to friends?	9	15	6	66.7
11. Would an honest boy or girl steal something at school?	8	11	3	37.5
12. Would an honest boy or girl steal his friend's belongings?	17	24	7	41.2
13. Would an honest boy or girl cheat on an examination?	11	14	3	22.3
14. Would an honest boy or girl let another person copy from his paper at school?	16	15	-1	- 6.3
15. Would an honest boy or girl listen to gossip about a friend?	21	20	-1	- 4.8
16. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a player in the game?	10	16	6	60.
Total	258	271	13	5.04

mean further that this group is old enough to fathom realistically the make believe world produced by motion pictures as it was suggested in the beginning of the chapter.

Table XI presents the responses of the thirty high school subjects of the Lemon Street High School to selected questions regarding honesty one week after viewing the motion picture "How Honest Are You" by pre-test scores, end-test scores and difference by number and percent. Tabulations reveal that the mean of these thirty high school subjects shifted from 9.5 in the re-test to 9.03 in the end-test, which indicates that the score is still larger than the pre-test score of 8.6 for honesty, but not enough to mean that there is a statistical significant difference.

There are instances where there are decreases in responses due to this time interval; while others remained stable through all of the experiments. This could mean that the attitudes are too well grounded to be shifted. There was an increase in responses for many questions for "honesty" which could mean that those individuals did not receive the orientation of the film until a lapse of time. But all of these variations are meaningless for the total score is not large enough for any other factors other than pure chance to be operating. Therefore, it may be concluded that this motion picture was not potent enough to shift the attitudes of the individuals composing this group.

Time will be taken here to try and look into some of the relationships between the recording of responses by elementary subjects and those recorded by the high school subjects. Table XII presents the responses of the thirty elementary subjects of the Lemon Street Elementary School and the thirty high school subjects of the Lemon Street High School to selected questions regarding honesty before and after viewing the motion picture "How Honest Are You" by pre-test scores, re-test scores, end-test

TABLE 12

RESPONSES OF THIRTY ELEMENTARY SUBJECTS OF THE LEMON STREET ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND THIRTY HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS OF THE LEMON STREET HIGH SCHOOL TO SELECTED QUESTIONS REGARDING HONESTY BEFORE AND AFTER VIEWING A MOTION PICTURE "HOW HONEST ARE YOU" BY PRE-TEST SCORES, BY RE-TEST SCORES, BY END-TEST SCORES AND DIFFERENCE BY NUMBER.

Questions	Pre-test			Re-test			End-test		
	Elem.	H.S.	Dif.	Elem.	H.S.	Dif.	Elem.	H.S.	Dif.
1. Would an honest boy or girl keep something he finds?	28	29	1	27	26	1	25	26	1
2. Would an honest boy or girl let another be blamed for something he did?	12	21	9	20	19	1	19	19	0
3. Would an honest boy or girl accept honors for something which rightfully belonged to another?	10	21	11	18	21	3	11	21	10
4. Would an honest boy or girl take more than his share of anything?	20	23	3	22	24	2	21	20	1
5. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth ?	13	16	3	14	7	7	13	7	6
6. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a friend?	8	9	1	15	14	1	14	12	2
7. Would an honest boy or girl tell the coach of a team that a player was dishonest?	9	15	6	15	14	1	12	14	2
8. Would an honest boy or girl tell his friend something about the dishonesty of another?	12	15	3	22	21	1	19	19	0
9. Would an honest boy or girl steal something from a friend?	15	17	2	21	20	1	17	18	1
10. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth to friends?	13	9	4	19	15	4	19	15	4



(Table 12 continued)

Questions	Pre-test			Re-test			End-test		
	Elem.	H.S.	Dif.	Elem.	H.S.	Dif.	Elem.	H.S.	Dif.
11. Would an honest boy or girl steal something at school?	12	8	4	24	12	12	21	11	10
12. Would an honest boy or girl steal his friend's belongings?	22	17	5	19	22	3	17	24	7
13. Would an honest boy or girl cheat on an examination?	11	11	0	22	12	10	16	14	2
14. Would an honest boy or girl let another person copy from his paper at school?	14	16	2	28	16	12	18	15	3
15. Would an honest boy or girl listen to gossip about a friend?	20	21	1	24	25	1	22	20	2
16. Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a player in the game?	10	10	0	17	17	0	15	16	1
Total	229	258	29	327	285	42	209	271	62
Percent	47.7	53.8	12.7 *	68.1	59.4	14.7 *	58.1	56.5	29.7 *

\*The percent of difference for the pre-test shows that the high school group checked 12.7 percent more responses than the elementary group. For the re-test the elementary group checked 14.7 percent more responses than the high school. The percent of difference for the end-test shows that the elementary group checked 29.7 percent more responses than the high school group.

soores and difference by number. Tabulations show that the elementary group shifted to a great extent more than the high school group for "honesty" in the three experiments. Table XIII presents the distribution of the favorable responses of the elementary and high school subjects by pre-test, by re-test, by end-test and by sex. The chi square ( $3.50 P = .10$ ), for the pre-test indicates that there was no possible statistical difference between the two groups and their conceptions of "honesty" before seeing the film. However, the re-test revealed slightly different results. The chi square ( $8. P = .01$ ), indicates that the probability of a difference occurring this size when only chance factors are operating are more than one in a thousand but less than one in a hundred. There are no factors present here to support the hypothesis that the attitudes of high school children and elementary children would be affected differently by the influence of the film.

The results of the end-test were still less significant. The chi square ( $.28 P = .50$ ) indicates that the same results could occur by chance more than fifty out of one hundred times. The shift is not therefore regarded as significant. It remains for us to note the results of comparing the pre-test results with those of the re-test and to compare the re-test with the end-test results.

When the chi square test is applied to indicate the shifts in responses between the pre-test and the re-test scores, a computed chi square value of  $33.2 P = .001$  was obtained. This indicates that there is a high probability of some factor operating other than chance. Just what this factor is cannot be determined with certainty but we can assume that it is the influence of the film.

The chi square ( $6.96 P = .01$ ) computed from the scores of the pre-test

TABLE 13

DISTRIBUTION OF FAVORABLE RESPONSES OF ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS  
BY PRE-TEST, BY RE-TEST, BY END-TEST, BY SEX

	Pre-Test		Re-Test		End-Test	
	Favorable Responses		Favorable Responses		Favorable Responses	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Elementary	126	103	165	162	143	136
High School	129	129	147	138	137	134
Total	255	232	312	300	280	270

$$* X^2 = 1.15$$

$$N = 1$$

$$P = .20$$

$$* X^2 = .03$$

$$N = 1$$

$$P = .70$$

$$* X^2 = .035$$

$$N = 1$$

$$P = .30$$

\* The value of chi square was computed from the total number of responses listed.

and end-test indicates that the probability of factors remaining in operation other than chance is one in one hundred. This means that the effects of the film are neutralized and that only chance factors need to be taken into consideration. It can readily be seen that the attitudinal behavior of individuals is strengthened or weakened by the course of inner development and by the experiences of life. The attitudes may be shifted in respect to their attachments so that different situations call them forth.

In this chapter the effects of the chosen motion picture on the attitudes of high school subjects have been reviewed and compared to some degree with the effects of the same motion picture on the attitudes of the elementary subjects. In the next chapter, an attempt will be made to reveal the direct findings and to give some logical account for the reactions of the subjects to this value.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY

Implicit in our definition of attitudes is the hope that an understanding of such preferences will shed some light on the larger problem of overt human conduct. In a society as complex as our own where the individual is bombarded with a wide variety of influences, the matter of changing attitudes of people takes on an importance no less than paramount. Against this picture we have seen projected numerous action programs of diverse motivations using innumerable techniques designed primarily for the purpose of consciously directing or re-directing human behavior. This project represents an attempt to inquire into one of these artificial techniques, the motion picture, to ascertain what, if any influence it exerts on the patterns of peoples' thinking. This final chapter will pull together the threads of our findings into a comprehensible pattern and, while it might correctly be said that the project has raised more questions than it has answered, give some insight into the problem.

It has been fairly generally accepted as common knowledge that the motion picture greatly influences behavior subjective as well as overt.

For purposes of investigation this assumption was stated as an hypothesis as follows:

One motion picture will shift attitudes of individuals in the direction of the theme of the picture and, further, this shift in orientation will vary in accordance with the age, sex and educational level of the subject.

To test this hypothesis the motion picture "How Honest Are You" was shown to a group of elementary school children and a group of high school children while noting their responses to questions on honesty. Findings of the

investigation may be listed as follows:

1. Sex is not a factor in the attitudes of elementary school children toward honesty. When the chi square test was applied to the two groups no significant difference was observed.
2. The motion picture shifted the attitudes of elementary school children in the direction of the theme. This is to say that when these subjects were questioned on the day following the showing of the film, they registered stronger attitudes in favor of honesty than they did before viewing the film.
3. Age is a factor in determining the effects of the motion picture on attitudes. Younger children are more flexible and more susceptible to influence.
4. The effect of the motion picture on the attitudes of elementary school children reached a peak on the day following the viewing of the film, then assumed a downward direction. One week after the showing of the film these children were less strong in their attitudes favorable to honesty than they had been on the day following the film's showing but they were still more favorably disposed than they had been before seeing the film.
5. There was no significant difference to be noted between the sexes in the high school in their attitudes toward honesty. This is in line with our findings for the elementary school group.
6. Education is a factor in determining the effects of the motion picture on attitudes. High school children are more broad in their thinking; more mature in their rejections of artificial stimuli.
7. The motion picture did not significantly shift the attitudes of the high school group in the direction of the theme of the picture. It should be noted that though the responses as a whole did actually change in the direction of honesty, this shift when measured by the chi square test was not statistically significant and might well have been due to chance factors. This was the day following the showing of the film.
8. The passage of time exerted little influence on the attitudes of the high school group toward honesty. When the group was tested one week following the showing of the film most of the gain was lost and the group practically returned to the position held prior to viewing the film.

9. When the responses of both elementary and high school subjects were considered as one group the day following the film's showing, the shift in attitudes was significant. This is so because of the great shift in attitudes of the elementary school children.
10. The effect of the film's influence decreased with time when both groups' responses were considered as one. The shift in the responses favorable to honesty of both groups when the end-test (one week after the film's showing) was compared with the responses prior to the showing of the film, the change was not significant.

Since this investigation has been primarily concerned with testing a specific technique rather than proving or disproving a theory, nowhere has there been an attempt to force the data to fit into any preconceived pattern. With this clearly understood and with our findings in mind it now becomes necessary to rephrase our hypothesis. This restatement might appear as follows:

Though there is some tendency for a single motion picture to affect the attitudes of the individuals in the direction of the theme of the picture, the effect will be relatively temporary and transitory. The influence of sex is negligible but age and educational level are worthy of consideration as influencing factors.

If there is any contribution which such an experiment as this one can make to our storehouse of knowledge it would appear to lie in the direction of two general, yet related, areas. First, it sheds some light on our theoretical understanding i.e., it provides another test of our notions about the conditions under which attitudes arise, persist and change. With precise techniques of measurements we are relieved of the necessity of relying upon estimates, guesses and indirect, common sense evidence. Further, research is obviously needed. One such project might well test the influence of a stimulus of longer duration; another might direct attention to why the attitudes were changed or not changed; and another might re-test the subjects after expiration of several months to see if

any changes remained. The second "contribution" has to do with practical implications of the study. Counsellors, teachers, parents and others interested in the problem of child rearing and development will want to know how well or how poorly their training programs are meeting the needs of youth. This study should call attention to the varying individual conceptions toward specific values and, consequently, suggest revision in training methods. If this study adds anything to our knowledge and understanding of either the theoretical problem on the one hand or the practical one on the other, the time will have been well spent.



## APPENDIX

### AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF ATTITUDES TOWARD HONESTY

Boy(    )  
Elementary(    )

Girl(    )  
High School(    )

This is an experimental study of attitudes toward honesty. You are merely asked to vote yes or no to the question of your choice. Read each question carefully and vote only one choice for each.

Would an honest boy or girl keep something he finds--

- (    ) if no one saw him find it?
- (    ) if the person to whom it belonged could not be located?

Would an honest boy or girl let another be blamed for something he did--

- (    ) if it meant getting a higher position?
- (    ) if he didn't know what he was doing?

Would an honest boy or girl accept honors for something which rightfully belonged to another--

- (    ) if he were not aware of it?
- (    ) if it meant extra money for him?

Would an honest boy or girl take more than his share of anything--

- (    ) if it were going to waste?
- (    ) if it would show others what a good sport he was?

Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth--

- (    ) if it meant keeping someone else out of trouble?
- (    ) if he were told to do it by an authority?

Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a friend--

- (    ) if he didn't know what he was talking about?
- (    ) if that friend had hurt him once?

Would an honest boy or girl tell the coach of a team that a player was dishonest--

- (    ) if it would mean that the player would be thrown off the team?
- (    ) if it meant getting even with the player?

Would an honest boy or girl tell his friend something about the dishonesty of another--

- (    ) if he wanted to see the fellow hurt?
- (    ) if he wanted to cure the person of the act?

Would an honest boy or girl steal something from a friend--

- (    ) if it were something he wanted badly?
- (    ) if it were dangerous for the friend?

Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth to friends--

- (    ) if it meant gaining their confidence?
- (    ) if he were repeating something spoken by others?

Would an honest boy or girl steal something at school--

- ( ) if no one was looking?
- ( ) if his school were being marred by the thing?

Would an honest boy or girl steal his friend's belongings--

- ( ) if the friend had more than his share?
- ( ) if it meant keeping his friend out of trouble?

Would an honest boy or girl cheat on an examination--

- ( ) if it meant taking home a better report card?
- ( ) if it were for fun or a game?

Would an honest boy or girl let another person copy from his paper at school--

- ( ) if that person was a friend?
- ( ) if it meant teaching the other person?

Would an honest boy or girl listen to gossip about a friend--

- ( ) if it meant that he could bully his friend?
- ( ) if it meant he could help his friend by knowing?

Would an honest boy or girl tell an untruth on a player in the game--

- ( ) if it meant giving his favorite player a chance to play?
- ( ) if he were taking someone's word as truth?

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Books

- Albig, William. Public Opinion. New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1939.
- Allport, Floyd and Katz, Daniel. Students Attitudes. New York: The Craftsman Press, Inc., 1931.
- Bird, Charles. Social Psychology. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc., 1940.
- Blumer, Herbert. Movies and Conduct. New York: The MacMillan Co., 1933.
- Bogardus, Emory S. Fundamentals of Social Psychology. New York: Century Co., 1931.
- Charters, W. W. Motion Pictures and Youth. New York: The MacMillan Co., 1933.
- Cuber, John. Sociology. New York: Appleton Century Crofts, Inc., 1951.
- Doob, Leonard W. Public Opinion and Propaganda. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1948.
- Folsom, Joseph K. Social Psychology. New York: Harper and Brothers. Publishers, 1931.
- Hartshorne, H. and May, M. A. Studies in Deceit and Character. New York: The MacMillan Co., 1928.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Studies in the Nature of Character. New York: The MacMillan Co., 1930.
- Holaday, Perry W. Getting Ideas from the Movies. New York: The MacMillan Co., 1933.
- Iron, Frederick C. Public Opinion and Propaganda. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1950.
- Klineberg, Otto. Social Psychology. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1940.
- Lindesmith, A. R. and Strauss, A. L. Social Psychology. New York: Dryden Press, 1949.
- McCormick, Thomas A. Elementary Statistics. McGraw Hill Book Company, New York: 1941.
- Mead, George H. Mind Self and Society. University of Chicago Press, Chicago: 1934.
- Newcomb, Theodore M. Social Psychology. New York: The Dryden Press. Publishers, 1950.

- Peterson, Ruth C. and Thurstone, L. L. Motion Pictures and the Social Attitudes of Children. New York: The MacMillan Co., 1933.
- Powell, Norman J. Anatomy of Public Opinion. New York: Prentice Hall, Inc. 1951.
- Sherif, Muzafer. Psychology of Ego-Involvements. New York: J. Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1947.
- Thomas, W. I. and Znaniecki, F. The Polish Peasants in Europe and America. Vol. I. Badger Press, 1918.
- Thorndike, Edward L. Psychology of Wants, Interest and Attitudes. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc., 1935.
- Williams, Robin M. The Reduction of Intergroup Tensions. New York: Social Science Research Council, 1947.
- Wilson, L. and Kolb, W. L. Sociological Analysis. New York: Narcourt Brace and Company, 1949.

#### Articles

- Bernard, L. L. "Social Attitudes", Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. II (1935), 305-06.
- Blumer, Herbert. "Social Attitudes and Non-Symbolic Interaction", Journal of Educational Sociology, Vol. 9 (May, 1936), 513-23.
- Clark, W. W. "The Measurement of Social Attitudes", Journal of Applied Sociology, Vol. VIII (1924), 345-54.
- Doob, L. W. "Some Factors Determining Change in Attitudes", Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, (October, 1940).
- Fearing, F. "Influence of the Movies on Attitudes and Behavior", Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Sciences. Vol. 250.
- Symonds, P. M. "A Social Attitudes Questionnaire", Journal of Educational Psychology, Vol. XVI (1925), 316-22.
- Thurstone, L. L. "Attitudes Can be Measured," American Journal of Sociology, (1928), 33:529-54.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Influence of Motion Pictures on Children's Attitudes", Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, (1931), 2:291-305.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Method of Paired Comparison for Social Values", Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, (1927), 21:384-400.